

Source Not Disclosed

Four Widows of Bay of Pigs Airmen Receive Mystery Checks Regularly

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The widows of three of four airmen who died in the Bay of Pigs invasion were interviewed by Wayne Whitt, Nashville Tennessean reporter.

time of their disappearance unless they remarry.

First one bank official and then another signs the checks. There is no indication as to the identity of the account against which the checks are drawn.

At first the checks were drawn on the Double Check Corp. of Florida. The women know nothing about Double Check. Their only contact with it has been through a Miami Springs, Fla., attorney. In the summer of 1961 they were changed and were issued by Bankers Trust.

Who were the men who were lost in the Cuban invasion?

The story given to their wives and the public

mother refused to believe her son is dead and has been in contact indirectly with Swiss authorities in hope they can find out something for her in Cuba. The Swiss government handles affairs for this Nation in Cuba.

The four men were recruited in January, 1961. They left here early in February. The

widows did not know where their husbands were going.

Shamburger's widow said he told her he was going to instruct some men about the B-26 bomber. Mrs. Gray's husband told her he was going to test fly planes in Texas. Ray told his wife he was going to a combined officers' training school. All said their work was secret.

The women wrote their husbands through a Chicago address: Joseph Greenland, P. O. Box 7924, Main Post Office. Their husbands' letters came from that address.

Date of Invasion

Late in April, 1961, they were informed their husbands had died April 19, the date of the Bay of Pigs invasion.

Alex E. Carlson came here from Miami Springs on behalf of Double Check to tell the women of their husbands' disappearance. He urged them to say nothing about it, saying there was a possibility they were alive.

Later Carlson and a Birmingham attorney, Thomas F. McDowell, told them there was no hope and that the story was to be given to the newspapers.

Carlson told newsmen in May 1961, that the men were operating a C-46 cargo plane. He said he did not know the nature of the cargo nor its destination.

The crew was operating under orders not to break radio silence except in case of extreme emergency. A voice was heard over the radio that one of the engines had failed and the plane was losing altitude rapidly. That, Carlson said, was the last contact with the plane and its crew.

BIRMINGHAM, March 3 (AP)—Every two weeks each of the widows of the four Birmingham airmen lost in the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba receives an envelope from the Bankers Trust Co. of New York.

There is no message in the envelope. But there is a check in it for \$225.

The women do not know who is paying the money. They have been told they will con-

ton that four Americans died in the invasion. He did not identify the men, but presumably referred to the Birmingham fliers.

The men were:

Riley W. Shamburger Jr., born in Birmingham Nov. 17, 1924. A World War II pilot, he was a test pilot for Hayes International Corp. and a major in the Alabama Air National Guard. He had more than 10,000 hours of flying time.

Wade C. Gray, born in Birmingham March 1, 1928. He had been a radio and electronics technician at Hayes but was unemployed at the time he was hired.

Thomas Willard Ray, born in Birmingham March 15, 1931. He was just returning from military duty at the time he left on the special mission, but had worked at Hayes.

Lee F. Baker, born in Boston sometime in 1926. He operated a pizza establishment and had worked for Hayes. His widow now lives in the Los Angeles area.

Accident Certificates

The widows have received death certificates stating that their husbands died by accidental drowning. Shamburger's